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|  | **Document CWG-LANG-13/2** |
| **8 September 2023** |
| **English only** |
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| Contribution by the secretariat |
| PURSUANT TO RESOLUTION 154 (REV. BUCHAREST, 2022) AND RESOLUTION 1372 (C15, LAST AMENDED C19) |
| **Purpose**This report provides an update to the Council Working Group on the use of the six official languages of the Union (CWG-LANG) on the implementation of Resolution 154 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) regarding the use of ITU’s six official languages on an equal footing in accordance with Council Resolution 1372, as revised in 2019. An earlier version of this report was presented to Council in its July 2023 session.**Action required**The Council Working Group is invited to **note** the report and **endorse** its Annexes.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**References**[*PP Resolution 154 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022)*](https://www.itu.int/en/council/Documents/basic-texts-2023/RES-154-E.pdf)*;* [*Council Resolution 1372 (Rev. 2019)*](http://web.itu.int/md/S19-CL-C-0138/en) |

1. **Evolution of the budget for translation of documents to the six official languages since the 2018 Plenipotentiary Conference**

As requested by the Plenipotentiary Conference, budget figures for translation and interpretation services are hereby submitted ([Annex 1](#Annex1), Table 1), divided into three categories: translation and associated-service budget and expenses; interpretation-service budget and expenses and total language-service budget and expenses. As requested by the ITU Council Working Group on languages (CWG-LANG), Annex 1, Table 2, includes information on the translation volumes per language over the same period. Translation volumes reflect the equality of treatment of all six ITU official languages, and the exceptional holding of three world conferences and assemblies in 2022.

1. **Procedures adopted by other international organizations inside and outside the United Nations system**

ITU participates actively in the International Annual Meeting on Language Arrangements, Documentation and Publications (IAMLADP) and its working groups and task forces, including the International Annual Meeting on Computer-Assisted Translation and Terminology (JIAMCATT). The principal conclusions of IAMLADP and JIAMCATT in 2022 focused on the need to: increase support for fully virtual meetings and physical meetings with remote participation; reflect changing working methods, including remote work and the use of new technologies, in flexible management of staff, adapted contracts and new job profiles; embed machine translation more deeply into translation processes while preserving the role of translation professionals as integral to the effective use of machine tools; develop revision and post-editing skills for translation staff; and increase awareness and suitable technical platforms for remote simultaneous interpretation.

ITU is actively involved in the IAMLADP task force work on creating and analysing a database of job profiles across member organizations to better understand changing requirements for language professionals.

1. **Initiatives undertaken by the General Secretariat and the three Bureaux to increase efficiencies and cost savings in the implementation of Resolution 154 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) of the Plenipotentiary Conference and Council Resolution 1372 (C15, last amended C19)**

**3.1 Implementation of measures and principles for translation and interpretation**

The [document](https://www.itu.int/md/S22-CL-INF-0007/en) on measures and principles for translation and interpretation in ITU, which was reviewed by Sector advisory groups and the General Secretariat and updated and endorsed by the Council at its 2022 session, has been systematically implemented by the secretariat as a benchmark for the delivery of translation and interpretation services for ITU conferences, assemblies, meetings, documents, webpages and publications. The document will be reviewed and updated as necessary in coordination with the Sector advisory groups to ensure the use of all official languages of the Union in publications, websites and documents.

**3.2 Implementation of the United Nations system objective of multilingualism and the Policy Framework on Multilingualism**

Following the approval of the ITU Policy Framework on Multilingualism by the Council at its 2022 session, the secretariat has developed a guide to current and future practices in the implementation of the policy in line with the recommendations of the report of the Joint Inspection Unit of the United Nations System on multilingualism in the United Nations system (JIU/REP/2020/6), to be presented at this meeting of CWG-LANG. The guide comprises an overview of bodies, roles, responsibilities and documents related to multilingualism at ITU; current and future processes and practices in implementing multilingualism throughout the organization; and staff guidelines on the use of machine translation, including a proposed matrix on translation methods for webpages and publications according to audience, degree of precision and technical nature of the source text.

**3.3** **Use of new technologies in translation services**

The General Secretariat is continuing to develop and improve the ITU Translate neural machine translation tool, including exploring additional commercial translation engines, training the engine with ITU data, establishing workflows for different applications, and evaluating quality, costs and user satisfaction. An updated version of the tool has been deployed across selected General Secretariat and Bureaux webpages on both SharePoint and WordPress platforms with a consistent, accessibility-friendly user interface and disclaimer and feedback features. The General Secretariat is working to integrate the ITU Translate tool into the master template of both platforms to enable machine translation as default across all future webpages. Where deemed necessary and within available resources, selected pages will continue to be translated by the professional translation teams.

ITU translators make use of ITU Translate internally for segment, document and website translation, as well as computer-assisted translation tools, including eLUNa and UNTERM, the United Nations system terminology database. An automatic post-editing function was introduced in April 2023 within ITU Translate. Implementation of the gDoc 2.0 document workflow management application, developed by the United Nations Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, began in August 2023 as part of ITU’s efforts to align working methods with those of other United Nations agencies and international organizations. ITU Translate was provided in a beta version at Council 23 for machine translation of conference documents. This could enable automatic translations in all language combinations of documents not yet officially translated or available only in the original language.

**3.4 Use of new technologies in interpretation** **services**

Remote simultaneous interpretation has been implemented for certain ITU meetings with remote participation. Cloud-based artificial intelligence (AI) interpretation solutions have also been tested and are being evaluated for quality and suitability for certain ITU meetings, noting that the quality of AI-based interpretation is not yet sufficient and its use should be considered with caution. The Interpretation Service continues to evaluate the feasibility of new modes of providing interpretation, identifying cost-effective solutions and the best possible quality of interpretation. A proposed strategy under development includes categorization of events and meetings with different interpretation needs.

**3.5 Terminology work in ITU**

The ITU Coordination Committee for Terminology (CCT) is continuing its work in standardizing terminology and definitions within ITU, based on proposals submitted by ITU study groups in English. A workflow has been put in place to improve efficiency and ensure that terms and definitions discussed during CCT meetings are translated by the General Secretariat and validated by CCT. All terms and definitions validated by CCT are included in the online ITU Terms and Definitions database. C&P also include these terms and definition in UNTERM, where ITU is responsible for the ICTs and telecommunications domains. A new CCT website providing ease of access to all relevant documents has been published.

Terminology work is also undertaken by C&P on a regular basis in all six official languages to support the needs of the language sections; this work is reflected in UNTERM. In addition, a proposal inviting interested Member States to collaborate with C&P on terminology was presented to CCT and modified following discussions during the CCT meeting of July 2023. It is submitted here as [Annex 2](#Annex2) to this document for the consideration of CWG-LANG.

**3.6 Harmonization of ITU websites in the six official languages, incorporating multilingualism into communications, knowledge exchange and social media**

Harmonization efforts continue with a common information infrastructure and design for all conference and event websites on the WordPress platform, including the ITU Council 2023 website. The events overview page has been developed in the new “One ITU” style on the WordPress platform. Harmonized templates, components and brand elements are available for the migration to WordPress and content creation, as well as the provision of user guidelines to ensure consistency within the “One ITU” style. ITU news, related media pages and speeches are available in all six languages through ITU Translate; press releases and media advisories continue to be human translated. The integration of ITU Translate into the template for all new WordPress pages will enable all content to be available immediately and simultaneously in the six languages by default, with the option to use human translation where necessary.

**4. Additional actions following revision of Resolution 154 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022)**

The General Secretariat and Bureaux are working to establish an ITU-wide mechanism to publish any contribution for an ITU event in its original language no later than three days after receipt. Member States are encouraged to make use of the conference proposals interface (CPI) and its guidelines to accelerate the publication of documents in the six languages of the Union and ensure compliance with official templates.

Efforts continue to ensure all ITU policy documents and other documents providing guidance on intellectual property rights in ITU are available in all six languages. The General Secretariat monitors the quality of interpretation and translation services, including by implementing delegate surveys following major ITU conferences and events. Levels of satisfaction with translation and interpretation in all languages remain high.

The secretariat places great importance on achieving greener meetings. Service Order 22/07, on ITU paperless guidelines, has been revised to increase environmental sustainability, enhance efficiency and reduce costs in ITU operations by conducting paperless conferences and meetings and minimize the printing and physical distribution of ITU publications.

A set of optimized templates has been developed to generate publications in accessible and platform-independent formats, including an application programming interface which will give access to HTML publications to increase content reach and availability. The secretariat continues to monitor the use of publications via statistics on the downloading and purchase of publications in different languages to inform future decisions on the use of machine translation.

The secretariat further notes the acknowledgment of the earlier version of this report ([C23/47](https://www.itu.int/md/S23-CL-C-0047/en)) by delegates at Council 23 and the issues raised by delegates, including provision of interpretation services, sign language, improved access to multilingual content on the ITU website and increasing the use of new technologies whilst monitoring closely to ensure quality.

**Anne****x 1**

**Table 1. Evolution of language-service budget and expenses (in 000 CHF), 2018-2022**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2018** | **2019** | **2020** | **2021** | **2022** |
| Translation & associated-service budget | 13 468 | 14 488 | 13 048 | 12 999 | 16 189 |
| Actual translation & associated-service expenses | 12 098 | 13 223 | 12 252 | 12 541 | 14 706 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Interpretation budget | 2 435 | 3 457 | 1 408 | 1 392 | 2 910 |
| Actual interpretation expenses | 1 852 | 2 698 | 1 338 | 1 522 | 1 957 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Total language-service budget | 15 903 | 17 944 | 14 455 | 14 390 | 19 099 |
| Total actual language-service expenses | 13 950 | 15 922 | 13 589 | 14 063 | 16 663 |
| *Savings* | *1 953* | *2 023* | *866* | *328* | *2 436* |

**Figure 1. Evolution of language-service budget and expenses (in 000 CHF), 2018-2022**

**Table 2. Evolution of translation volumes per language (pages)[[1]](#footnote-1)[1], 2018-2022**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Language** | **Translation volumes/year (pages)** |
| **2018** | **2019** | **2020** | **2021** | **2022** |
| Arabic | 8 083 | 8 892 | 8 400 | 7 843 | 8 962 |
| Chinese | 8 732 | 9 030 | 8 818 | 7 717 | 9 240 |
| English | 1 611 | 2 044 | 1 827 | 1 608 | 1 339 |
| French | 8 586 | 10 173 | 8 811 | 8 531 | 9 800 |
| Russian | 8 050 | 8 706 | 8 463 | 7 501 | 8 202 |
| Spanish | 8 135 | 8 928 | 8 215 | 8 072 | 9 174 |
| **TOTAL** | 43 197 | 47 773 | 44 534 | 41 272 | 46 717 |

**Figure 2. Evolution of translation volumes per language (pages), 2018-2022**

**Ann****ex 2**

Proposal for collaboration with Member States on terminology in all six official languages

# Introduction

Resolution 154 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) on the use of the six official languages of the Union on an equal footing *instructs the Secretary-General, in close collaboration with the Directors of the Bureaux* to continue to collaborate with interested Member States and, to the extent practicable, to refine the translation of terminology and definitions in all six official languages.

Recognizing that terminology is an essential part of translation, ITU’s Conferences and Publications department (C&P) works to enhance the quality and availability of terminology in all six official languages to support its translators.

In 2022, C&P acquired eLUNa, the computer-assisted translation (CAT) tool now used by ITU translators. As UNTERM, the UN multilingual terminology database, is integrated within eLUNa, translators can access terminology directly from their working environment.

UNTERM is maintained jointly by the UN Secretariat (including the main duty stations and regional commissions) and certain specialized agencies of the United Nations system (IMO, ITU, UNESCO, WHO and WMO). It is a linguistic tool created primarily to facilitate the work of linguistic staff of the United Nations system and other people around the world who participate or are interested in the activities of the organizations.

Within UNTERM, ITU is the reference for terminology related to ICTs and telecommunications in all six official languages. C&P is responsible for the maintenance of its own terminology, which includes ongoing work of reviewing, updating, cleaning and creating entries in all six official languages.

In addition to UNTERM, ITU also makes use of the [ITU Terms and Definitions](https://www.itu.int/br_tsb_terms/#/) database, which is maintained by TSB and BR. This provides a useful collection of technical terms specific to ITU's work with reference to ITU-R and ITU-T documents. The ITU Coordination Committee for Terminology (ITU CCT) validates terms and definitions coming from the different ITU Study Groups for inclusion in both the ITU database and UNTERM. C&P is responsible for providing equivalents of those terms in Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian and Spanish.

# Proposals for collaboration with Member States

C&P is aiming to build a global network of entities working collaboratively on terminology related to ICTs. Institutes/universities/academia recommended by Member States representative of and reflecting the six official languages of the Union are welcome to collaborate in the different areas listed below.

**1. Proposing equivalents for terms and commenting on existing equivalents**

C&P endeavours to provide terminology entries in all six official languages as far as possible. A list of entries missing one or more languages can be provided to entities interested in working on providing missing translations. Comments on existing translations of entries may also be provided.

**2.** **Proposing new concepts to be added**

C&P aims to stay up to date with emerging technologies. The field of ICTs and telecommunications moves very fast and translation sections need to be able to propose equivalents in their respective working language. C&P welcomes propositions for new terms to be included UNTERM. All propositions must be at least bilingual (English and another official language) with a definition and sources.

**3.** **Proposing definitions for concepts where they are missing**

Definitions are very important, providing a better understanding and enabling translators to translate the correct concept. Many entries in UNTERM do not currently have definitions. C&P welcomes the help of interested entities in providing definitions with sources.

**4.** **Helping with the translation of terms and definitions coming from CCT**

C&P is mandated to provide CCT with the translation of terms and definitions which it has validated in English. Interested entities can help by proposing equivalents and translations of definitions in their respective working languages. The inputs will be sent to language sections for revision and then proposed to CCT for final validation.

Propositions made by interested entities will be revised and/or validated by the language sections in C&P to ensure that ITU standards concerning translation and terminology are respected.

C&P also welcomes any suggestions and ideas on new ways to collaborate, such as sharing terminology databases and linguistic resources, or information helpful for translation and terminology work such as specific multilingual resources, useful websites for tracking emerging technologies, multilingual glossaries etc.

**This proposal is submitted to CWG-LANG for acknowledgement and approval. If positively received, a circular letter will be sent asking Member States to recommend entities which could collaborate with C&P on terminology work.**

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1. [1] One page equals 330 words. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)